

2020 VCE VET Music Industry: Performance performance examination report

General comments

In group performances, teachers are advised to ensure the work of all assessed performers is clearly discernible, which may pose more of a challenge in some contexts than others: for example, in large groups and groups with more than one performer on the same instrument. Teachers are also advised to ensure that non-assessed performers do not overshadow the work of assessed performers through playing too loudly, taking extended solos, being visually or musically dominant, or leading and directing.

Group performance teachers and students should carefully select works and arrangements that provide suitable opportunities across the program for all assessed performers to meet the criteria at the highest level of which they are capable.

Vocalists are strongly advised to select keys that suit their vocal range, which may not be the same keys as the reference recordings.

Specific information

Criteria 1–7

1. Compliance with the requirements of the examination

Minimum of three works performed.

At least one work performed from memory.

Performance configurations (solo or group) and use of non-assessed accompanist(s)/group performer(s), when needed, met.

Performance Program Sheet and Industry Statement Form completed and submitted prior to commencement of examination.

Program of works performed in accordance with information contained in the Performance Program Sheet and Industry Statement Form.

Work health and safety (WHS) principles applied appropriately in the performance.

Most students complied in all areas and received full marks in this criterion.

Where sheet music/charts are used, students are advised to move the stand away or clearly remove all sheets from the stand for at least one work to ensure they are fully compliant.

Teachers and students are advised to ensure the Performance Program Sheet and Industry Statement Form are filled out in advance and ready to be presented to the assessors at the commencement of the examination.

2. Skill in performing with accuracy and control

Accuracy and control of the rhythm, pitch, articulation, timing and phrasing, and tuning, as appropriate to the instrument/technology/voice and area of specialisation.

In this criterion marks are awarded based on the level or 'trend' across the whole program, and with regard to the degree of difficulty involved. Students are encouraged to select suitable repertoire and arrangements that enable them to demonstrate accuracy and control at the highest level of which they are capable.

High-scoring programs demonstrated a high level of accuracy and control in all aspects of the performance, including transitions, which were sustained for the whole program

Students who performed with a high level of accuracy and control in some parts of their program were unable to access full marks if a significant portion of their program was less accurate and controlled.

Students who performed a whole program or a majority of their program with a low degree of difficulty were also be unable to access full marks.

3. Skill in realising the expressiveness and versatility of instrument(s)/technology/voice throughout the program

Use of performance techniques such as phrasing and shaping music, maintaining a strict tempo, and artistic use of accent, crescendo, diminuendo, staccato, silence, legato, tenuto, rubato, ritardando, accelerando, pitch bending and other techniques, as appropriate to the area of specialisation.

Students who scored highly in this criterion presented works that provided opportunities to demonstrate versatility and a range of appropriate approaches to expressiveness across their program and across sections, especially repeat sections. This included well considered arrangements of the selected pieces, tailored to the strengths of the performer(s). Programs that were significantly shorter than the maximum time allowed typically provided fewer opportunities to demonstrate versatility, especially in groups with a large number of assessed performers.

Students who used similar approaches to expression across all, or most, of their program were unable to fully address the criterion.

While students are encouraged to seek opportunities to demonstrate expressiveness and versatility at the highest level of which they are capable, care should be taken to avoid overusing expressive devices and/or using expressive devices that are inappropriate to the style of music being presented, especially with regard to the style nominated in the Industry Statement.

Care should also be taken to avoid compromising accuracy and control through using expressive devices that require a degree of skill that is inappropriate for the skill level of the student. This approach will result in a lower score in this criterion and Criterion 2.

4. Ability to demonstrate variety in musical elements and conventions relevant to the area of specialisation

Skill in using variety of duration (rhythm, meter, pattern) and/or melody and harmony (scales, chords, chord progressions), and music systems relevant to the area of specialisation.

Students who scored highly in this criterion selected a program of works with a range of keys, time signatures and tempos, with opportunities to demonstrate a range of approaches to beat subdivision and,

where relevant to the instrument, a range of approaches to harmony, including chord voicings. For group performers this also included arrangements of works that enabled diversity in parts for harmonic instruments.

Programs with limited variety in musical elements and conventions also limited the opportunities for performers to demonstrate expressiveness and versatility, and these programs were therefore unable to be awarded full marks in Criterion 3.

5. Ability to demonstrate originality and innovative approaches in interpretation within the performance configuration (solo or group)

Skill in creativity and interpretation, and the ability to demonstrate appropriate musical nuance, an individual style of musical expression, and original and innovative approaches to stage performances relevant to the area of specialisation.

Students who scored highly in this criterion presented their work with a strong sense of personal voice that went beyond replicating a referenced recording or using a derived approach. In some cases, creative approaches to arrangements served as vehicles to assist the performer(s) to demonstrate originality.

Successful interpretive decisions included the use of appropriate expressive devices and variations in tonal colour to demonstrate nuance and sophistication.

Some students successfully used improvisation, both in terms of soloing, and spontaneous adjustments and elaborations, to demonstrate high-level interpretations.

6a. Ability to listen critically to one's own performance and continuously adjust one's own performance to produce the required outcomes relevant to the area of specialisation (Solo performance)

6b. Ability to listen critically to the performance of others and respond, interact and collaborate appropriately, adjusting the performance to achieve required outcomes relevant to the area of specialisation (Group performance)

Students who demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness in their ability to interact musically with other performers/accompaniment scored highly in this criterion. This included playing at an appropriate volume level and adjusting the level as required for each song and/or section, especially with regard to the role of the instrument, including soloing, accompanying and section work.

Vocalists using microphones are advised to develop effective microphone technique, including appropriate microphone placing across their dynamic range.

Some performers maximised their opportunities to demonstrate synchronicity with other performers/accompaniment through arrangements that featured more challenging elements such as stops and starts, dynamic changes, tempo changes and tempo rubato.

7. Skill in presenting a cohesive program of music

Skill in presenting an authentic (in relation to the selected area of specialisation), dynamic and well-constructed program of music with appropriate sequencing of items and appropriate choice of repertoire.

A number of performers, especially soloists, presented very well-constructed sets, with repertoire that was relevant to their Industry Statement and delivered in a well-paced sequence with a strong sense of flow and dynamism.

Some sets were poorly constructed, with a lack of cohesion and authenticity demonstrated through the presentation of works/versions of works that lacked relevance to the Industry Statement, and/or an impeded sense of flow through lack of organisation and/or poor sequencing of items.

Group performances involving instrument changes, especially large groups with frequent instrument changes, and performances that involve multiple non-assessed performers entering and leaving the performance space, provide additional challenges to minimise disruptions and not impede the sense of cohesion.

Criteria 8–10

These criteria relate specifically to CUAMPF402 Develop and maintain stagecraft skills. The key concepts to consider are communication and audience engagement. Students who scored highly in these criteria presented their work as an 'event' and created a sense of occasion that went well beyond just playing/singing their pieces. Students should be assisted to create a professional performance space that enables them to demonstrate a sense of delivering a performance in a professional environment. To score highly, students should ensure that they are familiar with the relevant performance conventions.

8. Ability to observe and maintain protocols appropriate to the area of specialisation

Skill in communicating effectively through original and innovative approaches to personal stagecraft, expressing appropriate dramatic nuance, while taking venue and style of performance into account.

Students who scored highly in this criterion delivered a performance that was highly personalised while strongly aligned to the performance conventions and style as identified in their Industry Statement. They created a convincing sense of occasion, which they sustained throughout the performance.

This included planned elements and spontaneous elements such as non-musical responses.

9. Skill in presenting a confident performance through consistent focus and energy, and with pacing appropriate to the area of specialisation

Skill in applying a range of personal stagecraft skills to engage audiences while performing a suitably paced and focused performance.

Students who projected a confident persona and who were highly engaged in their presentation throughout the performance, including between works, scored highly in this criterion. This was achieved by performers who demonstrated a strong sense of presenting a well-prepared and well-paced program to an audience.

Students and teachers are advised to ensure programs are well-prepared and all aspects of the performance, both musical and non-musical, are developed and organised to assist students to present their work with confidence.

Where it is not possible to present work in an authentic industry context in preparation for the exam, teachers are advised to simulate performance opportunities as often as possible throughout the year.

10. Ability to demonstrate key stagecraft skills in relation to the selected area of specialisation and market appropriate for the program of music

Skill in applying a range of stagecraft skills to present a coherent and appropriate image that enhances performances

Effective use of non-musical elements in performance including movement, facial expressions, way of holding instrument(s) or equipment and effective use of the performance space.

Students who scored highly in this criterion enhanced their musical performance through presenting a well-developed, strong, convincing and appropriate image that aligned with their Industry Statement and included effective use of the performance space, instruments and other equipment/props, with a strong sense of presenting their work to an audience.

Students are advised to identify their 'stylistic focus', 'area(s) of specialisation' and 'market' well before the examination to allow time to develop an appropriate image that aligns with their Industry Statement.